

Scout from the Bucks County Council and former president of that council and was honored with the Silver Beaver Award for his service to scouting.

Mike retired in 2017 and was consistently ranked among the most bipartisan Members of Congress.

I lift my prayers for Mike's wife, Kathleen; their six children; his brother, Congressman BRIAN FITZPATRICK; and the Fitzpatrick family during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, it is also appropriate to celebrate the tremendous accomplishments and difference Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick made in a relatively short life.

Well done, my friend. Rest in God's loving arms.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY).

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. THOMPSON) for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I, too, rise to honor the life and the accomplishments of Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick. He was a great and trusted colleague. More importantly, he was a good friend, and he was my friend.

He didn't seek the spotlight; he just sought to do the right thing.

He was all about representing his district. Representing his district put him at odds, oftentimes, with popular sentiment around here, but Mike wasn't bothered by any of that. He was true to his convictions; he was true to his family; and he was true to his friends.

Guys like Mike Fitzpatrick who come here, serve, and stay focused on what is important and stay true are hard to find and even harder to replace.

We wish God's blessing on Mike Fitzpatrick and his entire family. We pray the Lord will fill the intolerable emptiness of his passing.

I would just like to say: We miss you, Mike Fitzpatrick, and Godspeed.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER).

Mr. MEUSER. Mr. Speaker, I as well rise today to pay tribute to our friend, the Honorable Michael G. Fitzpatrick, a longtime Republican who served as a Bucks County, Pennsylvania, commissioner and served as a Member of the United States House of Representatives, who, sadly, passed away Monday, January 6.

Mike was the oldest son of eight children, born on June 28, 1963, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He grew up and resided in Bucks County. Mike was an Eagle Scout, an Eagles fan, and a graduate of Dickinson Law School.

Those who knew Mike said the same thing: He worked hard every day to make his constituents' lives better.

First elected to Congress in 2004, he served four terms and then stepped down, honoring his self-imposed pledge to term limits. Mike's brother, BRIAN FITZPATRICK, succeeded his older brother and continues to serve their home district honorably. BRIAN is a great Member and a friend to us all.

Mike was described by a friend as a classic Bucks County Irishman and a man whose family always came first.

Congressman BRIAN FITZPATRICK and the entire Fitzpatrick family appreciate our prayers. Mike is survived by, in addition to his brother BRIAN, his six other brothers and sisters; his parents, James and Mary; a grandson; a granddaughter; his wife of 31 years, Kathleen; and their six children.

I thank you for your work to make Pennsylvania and our country a better place, Congressman Fitzpatrick.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. JOYCE).

Mr. JOYCE of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and the legacy of former Pennsylvania Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick.

Mike was a dedicated public servant who proudly represented the people of Pennsylvania's Eighth Congressional District, showcasing incredible courage not only in Congress but throughout his life.

This week, former Congressman Fitzpatrick passed away after a valiant battle with metastatic melanoma. As a dermatologist, I have witnessed this disease claim many lives and devastate too many families. Here in Congress, it is my privilege to serve as co-chair of the Skin Cancer Caucus, and I remain dedicated to promoting innovative treatments and cures for melanoma.

On behalf of the 13th District of Pennsylvania, I am grateful to Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick for his longstanding service to our Commonwealth and to our entire Nation.

As we honor him today, I extend my sincere sympathies to the entire Fitzpatrick family, including my friend, Congressman BRIAN FITZPATRICK, upon the loss of a great leader from Pennsylvania and a great leader in our Nation.

#### RELEASE FUNDS FOR PUERTO RICO

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. VELÁZQUEZ) for 5 minutes.

Ms. VELÁZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday morning, southwest Puerto Rico was struck by a 6.4 magnitude earthquake.

That seismic event followed hundreds of smaller quakes that had rattled the region since December 28. However, Tuesday's quake inflicted enormous damage, causing a school to collapse, killing at least one person, and leaving almost the entire island without power.

Indeed, today, Puerto Rico's largest power generation facility, Costa Sur, remains offline as we speak. That power plant is responsible for 40 percent of electricity generation on the island. Even as of last night, more than two-thirds of Puerto Ricans had no electricity.

Mr. Speaker, 250,000 Puerto Ricans were without water. Hundreds of homes

were damaged. As of last night, more than 5,200 Puerto Ricans were sleeping on the street, afraid their homes could collapse on them.

For the people of Puerto Rico, this natural disaster evokes dark memories seared in our minds of how this administration and the Federal Government failed, turning a natural disaster into a humanitarian crisis.

In 2017, because of this administration's incompetence and indifference, the Puerto Rican people suffered immensely. They endured the longest blackout in American history, and 3,000 of our fellow citizens lost their lives. We cannot afford to repeat those mistakes.

Sadly, today, this administration's disdain for the people of Puerto Rico remains on full display, this time in the form of previously approved funds that it is withholding. In response to Hurricanes Maria and Irma, Congress passed \$8.3 billion in HUD relief and mitigation funding, resources that HUD to this day refuses to release. Let me repeat that: The Secretary of HUD is violating the law, scoffing at congressional intent, and blocking the people of Puerto Rico from receiving previously approved disaster funds. This comes even after another disaster has stricken the island.

We do not know yet how bad the devastation from this earthquake will be. We also do not know if there will be yet more earthquakes. But this is certain: It is unacceptable, especially now, for Secretary Carson and HUD to stand in the way of Puerto Rico's receiving previously allocated assistance. It is also illegal.

Mr. Speaker, these are our fellow citizens. They deserve our compassion and our assistance. When wildfires or earthquakes hit California or hurricanes strike Texas, Americans stand together and assist one another. They give each other the helping hand that they deserve. But when it comes to Puerto Rico, this administration instead chooses to stand in the way, to block necessary aid, and to put lives at risk.

Mr. Speaker, if these funds are not released and if Puerto Rican people perish in the aftermath of this earthquake, then I have to say that it will be the U.S. Federal Government that is responsible.

We cannot afford further delay. HUD must release these funds immediately, and FEMA must get to work, helping Puerto Rico recover from the latest catastrophe.

#### RECOGNIZING ALLEN BEERMANN'S RETIREMENT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. SMITH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. SMITH of Nebraska. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Mr. Allen Beermann, who is retiring from his